

Roberts (W.C.)

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

OF THE

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS,

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE, NEW-YORK,

AT THE

SPRING COMMENCEMENT, MARCH 12, 1863.

BY

WM. C. ROBERTS, M.D.



NEW-YORK:

JOHN A. GRAY & GREEN, PRINTERS, STEREOTYPERS, AND BINDERS,

FIRE-PROOF BUILDINGS,

CORNER OF FRANKFORT AND JACOB STREETS.

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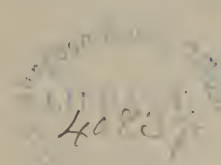
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CORRESPONDENCE.

WM. C. ROBERTS, M.D. :

DEAR SIR: At the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Alumni Association of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, held on the thirteenth instant, at the residence of Abram Du Bois, M.D., it was unanimously voted to request a copy of your Address for publication.

May I ask, in the name of the Association, that you will accord to them this favor?

Very respectfully and truly yours,

JOHN H. HINTON, M.D.

41 West 32d street, New-York, March 16th, 1863.

NEW-YORK, OCT. 20TH, 1863.

JOHN H. HINTON, M.D., *Secretary of the Alumni Association of the College of Physicians and Surgeons:*

DEAR SIR: Your polite note of sixteenth of March last, I duly received. Herewith you will find the manuscript of the Address of which you are so kind as to ask for a copy, and I can only heartily wish that it were more worthy of the honor which the Alumni Association has deigned to confer upon it.

With high respect, I am most truly yours,

41 East 13th street.

WM. C. ROBERTS, M.D.

ADDRESS.

BRETHREN OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK :

We meet to-night to *fraternize*, in the most emphatic meaning of the word, as lineal descendants of a common stock; to celebrate the Fourth Anniversary of our own Association, and the fifty-sixth annual commencement of our beloved *Alma Mater*; to acknowledge her fostering care and gentle teachings, and to assure her of our unabated love and gratitude; to renew old friendships, and to lament the absence of those who, setting forward with us cheerily on the journey of life, have, one by one, dropped away from our side.

It is a precious privilege to behold once more, however changed, the faces of those whom we have known and loved, who have been separated from us by time and distance, and some of whom, perhaps, have sacrificed much to be with us here on this our anniversary night. To hear again their cheerful voices, once so familiar to us: to return the cordial pressure of the hand, and to see, in the glowing face, the beaming eye and the wreathing smile, the

tokens of a welcome recognition. It is pleasant to compare our lots since we separated—to condole, or be condoled with, to congratulate, or to be congratulated, as evil or good may have befallen. Men feel at such a moment that they have never been forgotten; that, although lost to sight, they have still been dear to the memory of their old acquaintances; and there is something in the mutual burst of friendly interest which prompts the inquiry, which does honor to the heart and harmonizes with its best feelings.

It is on this account that meetings such as these are especially commendable, and men return from them to their homes and duties happier and better. We feel, at such times, that there are many whom we love and who love us; whom we have never forgotten and who have never forgotten us, and that between us there exists a bond which never can be broken. There will be sorrow for our memories when we depart hence, a heart-felt thrill of pleasure if we ever meet again.

They keep the memory green. We recall on these pleasant occasions many whom we have liked or disliked; whom we are now inclined to forgive even if they had once offended us. We recall many happy days and events, long past and almost forgotten. We satisfy many curious longings as to the fate of those who thronged with us the academic halls, some of whom, perhaps, we now see again in person, or hear of, for the first time in

many years. We reënact, in memory, the scenes of our student life. The departed of our old preceptors are gratefully remembered, the living hailed with a joyful reverence.

Yes, brethren, such meetings evoke in us all the best feelings of our nature. Friendships are renewed and differences forgotten. An unselfish pleasure, under this genial enthusiasm of recognition, hails every success: an unselfish charity covers every error: while the remembrance of those who are gone from among us rises with sorrow to the heart and is hallowed by a tear.

Yes, brethren, it is good for us to meet here, once a year at least, as many of us as can, to recall the past, to talk with those present and of the absent, and to interchange kind wishes for our mutual health and prosperity. We, your city brethren, welcome with cordiality such of you as have come from a distance to indulge in the pleasures of this fraternal reünion. We renew with pleasure our old acquaintances, and form, perhaps, new ones which it will ever delight us to remember.

And when you are returning to your several homes, we will bid you good speed, assured that you reciprocate our friendly feelings, and will return to us on each recurring anniversary if you can; that the recollection of this meeting will endure, with your memories, as a bright and pleasant era in your lives.

Who, brethren, can assign limits to the extent

and tenderness of a mother's love? It transcends all other affections of the heart. "There is no fount of love in all this cold and hollow world, so deep, so strong, so deathless, as that within a mother's heart!" It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will glory in the fame of her child and exult in his prosperity. He will be the dearer to her from misfortune. She will love and cherish him in spite of his disgraces, and, if all the world cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

It is she who supports the weak frame, steadies the tottering limbs, and guides the steps of infancy. She shapes the young, unfashioned intellect, and traces upon the smooth table of the heart lessons of piety and wisdom. She leads us on, step by step, to the age of self-government; watches with anxiety our every mental development; eradicates from the teeming garden of our minds every noxious weed, and sows in it the seeds of morality and virtue. She has sacrificed to us all her time and pleasures; she has enjoyed no comfort save in contributing to the welfare of her child. She has supplied all our wants, soothed all our pains, and sympathized deeply, as only a mother can, in our joys and sorrows. She has shared with us both our prosperity and our adversity; and when we leave the parental home, and venture forth amid the storms and perils of the sea of life, her

thoughts, her hopes, her fears, are with us to the last. How

“Can we pay the debt immense? and where
Begins our gratitude for all her care?”

The generous heart responds to all these benefits with fervent emotion, and from the first lisped “*dear Mamma*” of infancy, to the “*tell Mother—*” feebly faltered forth by the youthful patriot expiring on the battle-field, we derive the proofs of their reciprocation. The latest cherished and sweetest remembrance is of a mother’s love; the cruelest pang, the thought that we have spurned or outraged it.

Such being the claims of a mother to our love and reverence, it becomes our most solemn, and it should be our most pleasing duty, adequately to acknowledge, and by incessant tenderness and devotion, dutiful respect and affectionate reverence, to satisfy them as far as we can. Every act of life should be so regulated as to give her pleasure. She is keenly alive to every beauty or defect in the character of her child; on the one she prides herself, the other she palliates and defends; the one delights, the other saddens and humiliates her. Who would willingly grieve or afflict this loving heart? How gently, then, how circumspectly must he behave, who would repay, however inadequately, the life-long tenderness of a mother’s love!

Why is it, brethren, that the College in which we have been educated and of which we are graduates, is called our *Alma Mater*—“*Almam mean*

nutricem!" And why do we term ourselves her Alumni, her foster-children?

Hath she not been as a mother to us? Have we not rested on her bosom, and drawn from it the scientific *pabulum*, the milk of learning, which has contributed to our mental growth and development, and made us the men we are? Hath she not watched over our young steps and guarded our youthful morals with a tender care? Did we not derive from her that knowledge which has converted the raw, unfledged student into the grave doctor, competent to assume the sacred charge of men's lives, and the responsibilities of alleviating or curing their infirmities? Did she not, when at length our term of study and probation was ended, and she was satisfied of our competency, and pleased with the results of her careful teaching, bestow upon us the high reward of our labor, and invest us with the precious parchment which admitted us to the Doctoral grade: which enables us to append to our names the cabalistic initials, M.D., and entitles us to all the privileges, immunities, and rights, unto the said grade here or elsewhere appertaining? Hath she not given us an ample patrimony, according to her means; a profession everywhere recognized as honorable among men, admitting us everywhere into the very highest society, and capable, when properly exercised, of contributing amply to the wants and comforts, ay, even to the wealth and luxury of its votaries? Did she not

dismiss us with her blessing, as a tender mother doth her child, into the world, to battle for our own fortunes? Hath she not followed our subsequent career with a fond anxiety, exulting in the acknowledgment and increase of our skill and reputation, as the nurslings of her own bosom, grieving for and pitying our failures or disgraces, as blows inflicted upon her own loving heart? And when, as on an occasion like this, we return, like stray sheep to the fold, after perhaps many years, and are gathered again beneath her sheltering wing, how eagerly doth she embrace us, and how heartily rejoice that she is permitted to behold once more her long absent sons? And *we*, my brethren, for such, as sons of the same mother, I may justly call you, do *we* not reciprocate this fondness; do *we* not hail with joy this long-looked for meeting; do *we* not return with pleasure to the home of our youth, and delight in this restoration to the family circle?

Looking thus affectionately upon this dear old Mother, we see nothing to shock or sadden us. Older than when we left her she certainly is, but looking no worse. Age has mellowed her charms rather than diminished them.

Our Alma Mater, if we reckon her age from the organization of Kings College in 1768, of which she is a legitimate lineal descendant, is nearly a centenarian; yet about her there are signs neither of decrepitude nor decay. Her age is lusty and vigorous. Time hath dealt leniently with her; he hath

not bent her with his iron hand. Her eye is as bright, her carriage as erect, her walk as stately as in days of yore; and in tones as full and sonorous as then, she still proclaims the rich results of new and improved methods of scientific investigation. In no wise exhausted by the demand upon her resources of so frequent a succession of offspring, the stream of intellectual nourishment flows from her maternal breast in undiminished richness and abundance, and promises an ample supply for generations yet to come. Age has stimulated rather than paralyzed her energies. Yearly she increases the facilities she possesses for the education of her children, and proceeding, *pari passu* at least, with the kindred institutions that have sprung up in rivalry about her, she offers to them opportunities for the acquirement of a sound and thorough medical education not excelled by those which exist in any city in this or any other country of the globe. If age invokes reverence, it is fairly her due; and if untiring zeal, and a prestige of aristocratic respectability which none of her younger rivals have ever denied to her, can insure longevity, *she is destined to be immortal!* We need, then, have no fears for the continued existence and usefulness of our aged and honored parent. No one can seriously contemplate her extinction. She has within herself elements of revivification which forbid decay, and there can be no reasonable doubt that the patronage and respect of former days, which she

has so amply merited, will be continued to her. Increasing age, far from diminishing her powers, will but add force and dignity to her teachings; and the maturity of her judgment will stimulate her to increased exertions. And, in the gratitude, love, and veneration felt for her by her Alumni, there is no diminution, but an increase rather, to end only with their lives, and to be continued by countless generations of successors. Who of us is there, brethren, that does not proudly claim the privilege of styling himself a graduate of the old College of Physicians and Surgeons of New-York?

It seems but just, on an occasion like this, to recall for a moment the names of those good and kind aids in the training of our young minds, under our mother's gentle auspices, who have quitted the scene of their useful labors.

Looking, then, into the Elysium of the past, methinks I see, enjoying the *læta arva* they have so nobly earned, the shadowy forms of Bard, of Post, of Mitchill, of Hosack, of Francis, of Romaine, Miller, Bruce, Dewitt, McNevin, Rodgers, Osborne, Hammersley, Stringham, and Dana, all, by some of us here, well and kindly remembered. To them succeed, though happily still living, Mott, Stevens, Delafield, John Aug. Smith, Torrey, and Joseph M. Smith, all of whom, however, have ceased to occupy the professorial chair save the last-named good, faithful, and time-honored servant, and long may it be ere this last link which binds the present with the past is broken!

But could I omit to name among this second generation, if so I may call it, of our former teachers, one who has passed to his reward, and not be taxed with base ingratitude or shameful forgetfulness? No, brethren! the illustrious name of the intellectual John B. Beck, torn prematurely from life and the science he adorned, is inscribed upon the brightest pages of American Medical History, and his memory lies embalmed forever in the hearts of his surviving friends and pupils.

Nor should the names of the learned and classical Bartlett; of Rhineland, predecessor of the present distinguished incumbent of the Anatomical chair; of Manley, Goldsmith, and Brigham, all of whom, for a time, contributed to our instruction, and each of whom did well in his degree and is gone from among us, be suffered, on such an occasion, to pass unhonored and unsung.

When, however, we consider the conclave of men of high moral integrity, vast practical skill and experience, deep scientific research, and rare didactic capabilities, who constitute her present Faculty, and wear so worthily the mantles of these past Elijahs, we need have no fears for the future of our beloved Alma Mater.

For *her* we may safely predict a flourishing longevity. For *them* we humbly ask a long career of honorable usefulness, and the increasing respect and confidence of every friend and pupil of the good old school.

To this faithful parent, brethren, as to a natural mother, we owe a life-long debt of filial reverence and love. She is never to be grieved by our worthlessness and ingratitude; never must she have cause to blush for the degeneracy of her sons. Nor, when I look over the long list of her Alumni, nearly two thousand in number, since 1811, so elaborately compiled by the indefatigable zeal and industry of our late lamented associate, Dr. George H. Tucker, and see in it the names of so many who have held, or are holding, the highest places in their profession, both civil and military, and exercising its duties to their own honor and the welfare of the community, can I think, that she has other than cause for self congratulation. Her teachings have not been in vain. By their fruits ye shall know them.

Some few black sheep there may have been in so large a flock—some few stragglers from the fold—some forgetters of the Hippocratic oath—some apostates from the true faith. But what are they among so many? They are the fallen angels, and the bitterness of their own reflections is their best and fitting punishment.

Another pious duty, brethren, devolves upon us as grateful children. It is to sustain the onward progress of our Alma Mater, and advance her interests by every aid, comfort, and support that we can afford her. Thus only can we, in part at least, repay the obligations we are under to her, and secure her benediction and the approbation of our

consciences. For let us rest assured that every neglected opportunity, every stigma cast on her fair fame, every wound inflicted on her love and honor, every sorrow we have added to her soul, every furrow to her silvered brow, will one day come thronging back upon our memories and knocking dolefully at our souls.

There is yet another duty, brethren, which we owe equally to the reverence in which we hold our Alma Mater, whose happiness could not but be marred by any discord in the family, and to the noble profession of which we are members. It is to dwell together in unity, as brethren should; to suffer no unworthy lust for gain, no reckless ambition of place or profit, to induce us ever, under any circumstances, to depart from the strict line of ethical observance to which we are bound toward each other. We have a code sufficient for our guidance in every case, which, if we follow, we shall easily avoid the public scandal of a doctors' quarrel, always injurious to the Faculty, and the engenderment of personal differences, always unpleasant, and which, though forgiven, are perhaps never wholly forgotten.

It is but a just homage to the memory of departed worth, a tender tribute of fraternal affection, to recall the names of those who have been taken from us by death during the past year. I am aware only of six who have fallen beneath the hand of the destroyer. They are John Miller,

(1829,) H. M. Lyman, Wm. H. Denniston, (1856,) Wm. H. Milner, (1832,) Jacob Harsen, Jr., (1829,) and George H. Tucker, (1851.)

Dr. John Miller was a counsellor of this Association for the year 1862-3, and enjoyed an enviable position in his profession.

Drs. Lyman, Denniston, and Milner are each entitled to the high and lasting regard and affection of their Alma Mater, and of their surviving brethren, as well as to the gratitude of their country, having fallen victims to disease contracted while serving in the field, and heroically contributing, at the sacrifice of their own lives, to mitigate the sufferings of the unfortunate victims of the cruel war which now desolates our once united and happy Republic.

The name of Jacob Harsen, Jr., will ever be borne in grateful remembrance by the friends of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, as a most dutiful son of his Alma Mater. Blessed with an ample fortune, he devoted a portion of his means to the establishment of three annual prizes, to be awarded by the Faculty, for the best written reports of the Clinical Instruction of the New-York Hospital; thus evincing his earnest desire for the progress of the profession, and setting an almost solitary example of zeal in behalf of the interests of his Alma Mater, which may well shame the supineness of many equally able, and challenge their imitation. Let us hope that the names of Stevens and Har-

sen may not much longer be found *alone* upon the list of College benefactors.

In the premature demise of George H. Tucker, M.D., our Alma Mater has lost a promising scion, whose zeal in her and our behalf, Fellow-Alumni, is conspicuously shown in the Catalogue of the Alumni, Officers and Fellows, from 1807 to 1859, so ably and industriously compiled by him. In such and other forms of statistical research, Dr. Tucker had no competitor among us, and his death is to be deplored, not less as the severance of a link in the chain of fraternity, than as a professional calamity.

Having thus paid to the memories of such of our departed brethren of the past year as occur to my mind, the well-deserved tribute of a parting sigh as we turn sadly away from their fresh-made graves, it behooves me to bring my discourse to a close. Thanking you for your kind attention, and looking forward with hope and pleasure to our next annual meeting, I bid you all, until then, with every good wish for your health and prosperity, an affectionate FAREWELL.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS, AND NOW
FELLOW-ALUMNI :

Permit me, in the name of my associates, to congratulate you on the successful termination of your studies, and on the possession of the diploma you

have so eagerly coveted, so anxiously striven for, and so creditably obtained.

You come to us with all your blushing honors thick upon you, and fully accredited for high scientific attainments and unimpeachable moral integrity. We cordially welcome you into the ranks of the profession and into the Association whose anniversary we this evening celebrate, and to which, equally with ourselves, you now belong.

We are, in a double sense, brethren, and you have our best wishes for your success. Remember always your debt of gratitude and duty to your Alma Mater; and so bear yourselves as that she and we may be proud of you; that the promise of excellence you have already given may be fulfilled; that the science of Medicine may be advanced by your exertions, the Profession ennobled by your zeal and usefulness, and the Public benefitted by your humanity and skill.

Much, at least, of your future eminence will depend upon yourselves; and, although "'tis not in mortals to *command* success," you must do more, *deserve* it!

Your Alma Mater, my dear young brethren, dismisses you, on this momentous evening of your lives, with fond and hopeful solicitude, into the world, to struggle for yourselves; and may God's blessing rest upon your honest endeavors!

GRADUATION.

Candidates for the degree of Doctor of Medicine must have attended two full courses of Lectures—the *latter* in this College. They must have studied medicine three years, under the direction of a regularly authorized physician, and have attained the age of twenty-one years. Each candidate is required to write a medical thesis, and to deposit it with the Secretary of the Faculty. Full certificates of the time of study, of age, and of moral character, must also be furnished.

The examination of candidates takes place semi-annually; that for graduation in the spring, early in March; that for graduation in the fall, on the second Tuesday in September.

FEEES.

Matriculation Fee, \$5.

Fees for the full Course of Lectures by all the Professors, \$105; for each separate ticket, \$15.

Ticket of the Demonstrator of Anatomy, \$5.

Graduation Fee, \$30.

The Tickets are expected to be taken out within the first four weeks after the opening of the term.

Students who have attended two full courses in this College, or who, having attended one full course in some regularly established medical school, shall *subsequently* attend one full course in this College, are admitted to a third course of lectures on paying the matriculation fee only.

GRADUATES of this School are admitted without fee. GRADUATES of other schools, who have been in practice three years, and *Theological Students*, are admitted on general ticket, by paying the matriculation fee.

Letters requiring information should be directed to the Secretary of the Faculty, Dr. DALTON, at the *College of Physicians and Surgeons, corner of Twenty-Third Street and Fourth Avenue, New-York.*

Students are requested, on their arrival in the city, to call at the College and register their names with the Janitor, Mr. Denham, who will give them all necessary information, and aid them in obtaining board.

OFFICERS

OF THE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

OF THE

College of Physicians and Surgeons,

FOR THE YEAR 1863-64.

PRESIDENT, ABRAM DuBOIS, M.D., *New-York.*

VICE-PRESIDENT, JARED LINSLEY, M.D., "

SECRETARY, JOHN H. HINTON, M.D., "

TREASURER, HENRY B. SANDS, M.D., "

COUNCILLORS.

WILLIAM VAN DEURSEN, M.D., . . . *New-Brunswick, N. J.*

ISAAC M. CAMPBELL, M.D., . . . *Charleston, S. C.*

THOMAS W. BLATCHFORD, M.D., . . . *Troy, N. Y.*

NICOLL H. DERING, M.D., . . . *Utica, N. Y.*

JOHN TORREY, M.D., LL.D., . . . *New-York.*

JOSEPH MAURAN, M.D., . . . *Providence, R. I.*

BENJAMIN OGDEN, M.D., . . . *New-York.*

JOHN I. WESTERVELT, M.D., . . . *Staten Island, N. Y.*

THEODORE L. MASON, M.D., . . . *Brooklyn, L. I.*

OLIVER BRONSON, M.D., . . . *New-York.*

CHARLES S. TRIPLER, M.D., . . . *U. S. Army.*

JOHN MILLER, M.D., . . . *New-York.*

JAMES D. FITCH, M.D., . . . "

JARED LINSLEY, M.D., . . . "

MIDDLETON GOLDSMITH, M.D., . . . *Louisville, Ky.*

GEORGE C. BLACKMAN, M.D., . . . *Cincinnati, O.*

RICHARD H. COOLIDGE, M.D., . . . *U. S. Army.*

D. TILDEN BROWN, M.D., . . . *Bloomington, N. Y.*

JOHN L. LeCONTE, M.D., . . . *Philadelphia, Pa.*

HENRY D. NOYES, M.D., . . . *New-York.*

A. G. THOMPSON, M.D., . . . *Istip, L. I.*

ORATOR FOR 1864, JOSEPH MAURAN, M.D., . . . *Providence, R. I.*

ALTERNATE, HENRY A. DUBOIS, M.D., . . . *New-Haven, Conn.*